

represents opportunities lost. I have found that to be true around here, too.

So where do we go from here? Some media pundits say that we will have 2 years of stalemate because the Republican majority is too small. Some say that a White House bent on revenge will not give us a moment's peace. Some say the minority in this House will prevent passage of serious legislation so that they can later claim this was a "do-nothing" Congress.

Washington is a town of rumors and guesses and speculation, so none of this comes as a surprise, but none of it needs to come true; that is, if we really respect the voters that sent us here.

To my Republican colleagues, I say, it is time to put forward the major elements of our legislative program. We will succeed or fail depending upon how sensible a program we offer.

To my Democratic colleagues, I will say, I will meet you halfway; maybe more so, on occasion. But cooperation is a two-way street. I expect you to meet me halfway, too.

The President and a number of Democrats here in the House have been saying it is time to address several issues head-on. I will buy that, but I think we should agree that stalemate is not an option; solutions are.

To all my colleagues, I say: We must get our job done and done now. We have an obligation to pass all the appropriation bills by this summer. We will not leave this Chamber until we do. I intend to be a good listener, but I want to hear ideas and the debate that flows from them. I will have a low tolerance for campaign speeches masquerading as debate, whatever the source.

Our country faces four big challenges which we must address, and not next month or next year or the year after that, but now. Each challenge involves an element of our security.

First is retirement and health security. Both our social security and Medicare programs will run into brick walls in a few years if we do not do something about them now. We must make sure that social security is there for those who depend on it and those who expect to. We also must consider options for younger workers, so they can look forward to an even brighter retirement.

Nearly a year ago President Clinton came here to give his State of the Union Address. He called for reform of social security. This year I invite him to return to give us his reform plan, and he has my assurance that it will be taken seriously.

Second, we must ensure a secure future for America's children by insisting that every child has a good school and a safe, drug-free environment. In my 16 years as a teacher, I learned that most of the decisions having to do with education are best left to the people closest to the situation: parents, teachers, school board members. What should the Federal government's role be? It should be to see that as many edu-

cation dollars as possible go directly to the classrooms, where they will do the most good.

Next is economic security. In the early eighties we adopted policies that laid the foundation for long-term growth. Except for one brief period, that growth has continued ever since. We want our economy to keep on growing. Toward that end, it is time for us in Congress to put a microscope to the ways that government takes money from our fellow citizens and how it spends it.

There is a culture here in Washington that has grown unchallenged for too long. It combines three notions. One is that government has a prior claim to the earnings of all Americans, as if they worked for the government and not the other way around. Another notion is that a government program, once it is begun, will never end. A third notion is that every program must grow each passing year.

To borrow a musical line, it just ain't necessarily so; at least, it will not be as long as I am around here to have something to say about it. We must measure every dollar we spend by this criterion: Is it really necessary?

This is important. For most Americans, money does not come easy. When I was a kid, to make ends meet my dad had a feed business and he worked nights in a restaurant. My mom raised chickens and sold the eggs. I still remember, when tax time came around, our family really felt it. What we need is a leaner, more efficient government, along with tax policies that spur and sustain growth by giving tax relief to all working Americans.

Finally, there is the challenge of America's security in a world of danger and uncertainty. Without it, other elements of our security will not be possible. We no longer worry about Soviet nuclear bombs raining down on us. Today there are different worries: the sudden violence of a terrorist bomb, the silent threat of biological weapons, or the rogue state that aims a deadly missile at one of our cities.

We need a defense capability that matches these turn-of-the-century threats. We have asked the men and women of our Armed Forces to take on assignments in many corners of the Earth. Yet, we have not given them the best equipment or preparation that they need to match those assignments. That must be corrected.

These are not Democratic or Republican issues, they are American issues. We should be able to reach agreement quickly on the goals. And yes, we are going to argue about the means, but if we are in earnest about our responsibilities, we will find common ground to get the job done. In the process, we will build the people's faith in this great United States Congress.

As a classroom teacher and coach, I learned the value of brevity. I learned that it is work, not talk, that wins championships.

In closing, I want you to know just how proud I am to be chosen to be your

Speaker. There is a big job ahead for all of us, so I ask that God bless this House as we move forward together. I thank the Members very much. Now, let us bring an end to talk and let us get to work.

I recognize my friend, the distinguished gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), Dean of the House, my colleague from the Committee on Commerce, whose common sense and fairness I admire. He will administer the oath of office.

Mr. DINGELL then administered the oath of office to Mr. HASTERT, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter. So help you God.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

□ 1400

SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS

The SPEAKER. According to the precedents, the Chair will swear in all Members of the House at this time.

If the Members will rise, the Chair will now administer the oath of office.

The Members-elect and Delegates-elect and the Resident Commissioner-elect rose, and the Speaker administered the oath of office to them as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter. So help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations. You are now Members of the 106th Congress.

SWEARING IN OF MEMBER-ELECT

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. EHRLICH) kindly come to the well of the House and take the oath of office at this time.

Mr. EHRLICH appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter. So help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations. You are now a Member of the United States Congress.

MAJORITY LEADER

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Republican Conference, I am directed by that conference to notify the House officially that the Republican Members have selected as their majority leader the gentleman from Texas, the Honorable RICHARD K. ARMEY.

MINORITY LEADER

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Democratic Caucus, I have been directed to report to the House that the Democratic Members have selected as minority leader the gentleman from Missouri, the Honorable RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

MAJORITY WHIP

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Republican Conference, I am directed by that conference to notify the House officially that the Republican Members have selected as our majority whip the gentleman from Texas, the Honorable TOM DELAY.

MINORITY WHIP

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Democratic Caucus, I have been directed to report to the House that the Democratic Members have selected as minority whip the gentleman from Michigan, the Honorable DAVID E. BONIOR.

□ 1415

ELECTION OF CLERK OF THE HOUSE, SERGEANT AT ARMS, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, AND CHAPLAIN

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 1) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1

Resolved, That Jeffrey J. Trandahl of the Commonwealth of Virginia be, and is hereby, chosen Clerk of the House of Representatives;

That Wilson S. Livingood of the Commonwealth of Virginia be, and is hereby, chosen Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives;

That James M. Eagen III, of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania be, and is hereby, chosen Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives; and

That Reverend James David Ford of the Commonwealth of Virginia be, and is hereby, chosen Chaplain of the House of Representatives.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment to the resolution, but before offering the amendment, I request that there be a division of the question on the resolution so that we may have a separate vote on the Chaplain.

The SPEAKER. The question will be divided.

The question is on agreeing to that portion of the resolution providing for the election of the Chaplain.

That portion of the resolution was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FROST

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment to the remainder of the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FROST: Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert:

That Dan Turton of the Commonwealth of Virginia be, and is hereby, chosen Clerk of the House of Representatives;

That Sharon Daniels of the State of Maryland be, and is hereby, chosen Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives; and

That Steve Elmendorf of the District of Columbia be, and is hereby, chosen Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Frost).

The amendment was rejected.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the remainder of the resolution offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS).

The remainder of the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER. Will the officers-elect present themselves in the well of the House?

The officers-elect presented themselves at the bar of the House and took the oath of office as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter. So help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations, you have been sworn in as officers of the House.

NOTIFICATION TO THE SENATE

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 2) to inform the Senate that a quorum of the House has assembled, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 2

Resolved, That the Senate be informed that a quorum of the House of Representatives has assembled; that J. Dennis Hastert, a Representative from the State of Illinois, has been elected Speaker; and Jeffrey J. Trandahl, a citizen of the Commonwealth of Virginia, has been elected Clerk of the House of Representatives of the One Hundred Sixth Congress.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 3) providing for a committee to notify the President of the assembly of the Congress, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 3

Resolved, That a committee of two Members be appointed by the Speaker on the part of the House of Representatives to join with a committee on the part of the Senate to notify the President of the United States that a quorum of each House has assembled and Congress is ready to receive any communication that he may be pleased to make.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to consider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT, PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 3

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to join a committee on the part of the Senate to notify the President of the United States that a quorum of each House has been assembled, and that Congress is ready to receive any communication that he may be pleased to make, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT).

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO INFORM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF THE ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER AND THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 4) to inform the President of the United States of the election of the Speaker and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 4

Resolved, That the Clerk be instructed to inform the President of the United States that the House of Representatives has elected J. Dennis Hastert, a Representative from the State of Illinois, Speaker; and Jeffrey J. Trandahl, a citizen of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Clerk of the House of Representatives of the One Hundred Sixth Congress.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RULES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I call up a privileged resolution (H. Res. 5) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows: